

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

7-ELEVEN, INC.,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GURTAR SANDHU &
SSS REALM CORPORATION,

Defendants.

Case No. 8:24-cv-00490-JWH-KES

**STIPULATED PROTECTIVE
ORDER**

I. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

A. Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties

1 acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all
2 disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from
3 public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that
4 are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal principles. The
5 parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section XIII(C), below, that this
6 Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential
7 information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that
8 must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks
9 permission from the Court to file material under seal.

10 **II. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT**

11 A. This action is likely to involve trade secrets, customer and pricing lists
12 and other valuable research, development, commercial, financial, technical
13 and/or proprietary information for which special protection from public
14 disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this action
15 is warranted. Such confidential and proprietary materials and information
16 consist of, among other things, confidential business or financial information,
17 information regarding confidential business practices, or other confidential
18 research, development, or commercial information (including information
19 implicating privacy rights of third parties), information otherwise generally
20 unavailable to the public, or which may be privileged or otherwise protected
21 from disclosure under state or federal statutes, court rules, case decisions, or
22 common law. Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to facilitate
23 the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials,
24 to adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep confidential,
25 to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of such
26 material in preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to address their handling
27 at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends of justice, a protective order for
28 such information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that

1 information will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that
2 nothing be so designated without a good faith belief that it has been maintained
3 in a confidential, non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not
4 be part of the public record of this case.

5 **III. DEFINITIONS**

6 A. Action: The above captioned lawsuit.

7 B. Challenging Party: A Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation
8 of information or items under this Order.

9 C. “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: Information (regardless of
10 how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for
11 protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above
12 in the Good Cause Statement.

13 D. Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as
14 their support staff).

15 E. Designating Party: A Party or Non-Party that designates information or
16 items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as
17 “CONFIDENTIAL.”

18 F. Disclosure or Discovery Material: All items or information, regardless
19 of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained
20 (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things),
21 that are produced or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this
22 matter.

23 G. Expert: A person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter
24 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to
25 serve as an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

26 H. House Counsel: Attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action.
27 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other
28 outside counsel.

1 I. Non-Party: Any natural person, partnership, corporation, association,
2 or other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

3 J. Outside Counsel of Record: Attorneys who are not employees of a party
4 to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and
5 have appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law
6 firm which has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

7 K. Party: Any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
8 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and
9 their support staffs).

10 L. Producing Party: A Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or
11 Discovery Material in this Action.

12 M. Professional Vendors: Persons or entities that provide litigation support
13 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
14 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or
15 medium) and their employees and subcontractors.

16 N. Protected Material: Any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is
17 designated as "CONFIDENTIAL."

18 O. Receiving Party: A Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material
19 from a Producing Party.

20 **IV. SCOPE**

21 A. The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only
22 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or
23 extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or
24 compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or
25 presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

26 B. Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of
27 the trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at
28 trial.

1 **V. DURATION**

2 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations
3 imposed by this Order shall remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees
4 otherwise in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall
5 be deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this
6 Action, with or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the
7 completion and exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or
8 reviews of this Action, including the time limits for filing any motions or
9 applications for extension of time pursuant to applicable law.

10 **VI. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL**

11 A. Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection

12 1. Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for
13 protection under this Order must take care to limit any such designation
14 to specific material that qualifies under the appropriate standards. The
15 Designating Party must designate for protection only those parts of
16 material, documents, items, or oral or written communications that
17 qualify so that other portions of the material, documents, items, or
18 communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept
19 unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

20 2. Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited.
21 Designations that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been
22 made for an improper purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case
23 development process or to impose unnecessary expenses and burdens
24 on other parties) may expose the Designating Party to sanctions.

25 3. If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or
26 items that it designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that
27 Designating Party must promptly notify all other Parties that it is
28 withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

1 B. Manner and Timing of Designations

2 1. Except as otherwise provided in this Order (*see, e.g.*, Section
3 B(2)(b) below), or as otherwise stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or
4 Discovery Material that qualifies for protection under this Order must
5 be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or produced.

6 2. Designation in conformity with this Order requires the following:

7 a. For information in documentary form (*e.g.*, paper or
8 electronic documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or
9 other pretrial or trial proceedings), that the Producing Party affix
10 at a minimum, the legend “CONFIDENTIAL” (hereinafter
11 “CONFIDENTIAL legend”), to each page that contains protected
12 material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page
13 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly
14 identify the protected portion(s) (*e.g.*, by making appropriate
15 markings in the margins).

16 b. A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents
17 available for inspection need not designate them for protection
18 until after the inspecting Party has indicated which documents it
19 would like copied and produced. During the inspection and
20 before the designation, all of the material made available for
21 inspection shall be deemed “CONFIDENTIAL.” After the
22 inspecting Party has identified the documents it wants copied and
23 produced, the Producing Party must determine which documents,
24 or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then,
25 before producing the specified documents, the Producing Party
26 must affix the “CONFIDENTIAL legend” to each page that
27 contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of the
28 material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party

also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

c. For testimony given in depositions, that the Designating Party identify the Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition all protected testimony.

d. For information produced in form other than document and for any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend "CONFIDENTIAL." If only a portion or portions of the information warrants protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected portion(s).

C. Inadvertent Failure to Designate

1. If timely corrected, an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the Designating Party's right to secure protection under this Order for such material. Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

VII. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

A. Timing of Challenges

1. Any party or Non-Party may challenge a designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court's Scheduling Order.

B. Meet and Confer

1. The Challenging Party shall initiate the dispute resolution process under Local Rule 37.1 et seq.

1 C. The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on
2 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper
3 purpose (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other
4 parties) may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the
5 Designating Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all
6 parties shall continue to afford the material in question the level of protection
7 to which it is entitled under the Producing Party's designation until the Court
8 rules on the challenge.

9 **VIII. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL**

10 A. Basic Principles

11 1. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is disclosed or
12 produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this
13 Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this
14 Action. Such Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories
15 of persons and under the conditions described in this Order. When the
16 Action has been terminated, a Receiving Party must comply with the
17 provisions of Section XIV below.

18 2. Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving
19 Party at a location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is
20 limited to the persons authorized under this Order.

21 B. Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items

22 1. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court or permitted in writing by
23 the Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information
24 or item designated "CONFIDENTIAL" only to:

25 a. The Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this
26 Action, as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record
27 to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for
28 this Action;

1 b. The officers, directors, and employees (including House
2 Counsel) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably
3 necessary for this Action;

4 c. Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to
5 whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who
6 have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound”
7 (Exhibit A);

8 d. The Court and its personnel;

9 e. Court reporters and their staff;

10 f. Professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and
11 Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary
12 for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and
13 Agreement to be Bound” attached as Exhibit A hereto;

14 g. The author or recipient of a document containing the
15 information or a custodian or other person who otherwise
16 possessed or knew the information;

17 h. During their depositions, witnesses, and attorneys for
18 witnesses, in the Action to whom disclosure is reasonably
19 necessary provided: (i) the deposing party requests that the
20 witness sign the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be
21 Bound;” and (ii) they will not be permitted to keep any
22 confidential information unless they sign the “Acknowledgment
23 and Agreement to Be Bound,” unless otherwise agreed by the
24 Designating Party or ordered by the Court. Pages of transcribed
25 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal
26 Protected Material may be separately bound by the court reporter
27 and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted under this
28 Stipulated Protective Order; and

i. Any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel, mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

**IX. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED
PRODUCED IN OTHER LITIGATION**

A. If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

1. Promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification shall include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

2. Promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and

3. Cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

B. If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the Court from which the subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in that court of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful directive from another court.

**X. A NON-PARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE
PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION**

A. The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Non-Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

B. In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to produce a Non-Party’s confidential information in its possession, and the Party is subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party’s confidential information, then the Party shall:

1. Promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement with a Non-Party;
2. Promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific description of the information requested; and
3. Make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-Party, if requested.

C. If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may produce the Non-Party’s confidential information responsive to the discovery request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court. Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party

1 shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in this court of its
2 Protected Material.

3 **XI. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL**

4 A. If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has
5 disclosed Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not
6 authorized under this Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must
7 immediately (1) notify in writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized
8 disclosures, (2) use its best efforts to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the
9 Protected Material, (3) inform the person or persons to whom unauthorized
10 disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order, and (4) request such
11 person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to be
12 Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

13 **XII. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE**
14 **PROTECTED MATERIAL**

15 A. When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain
16 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other
17 protection, the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in
18 Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to
19 modify whatever procedure may be established in an e-discovery order that
20 provides for production without prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal
21 Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on
22 the effect of disclosure of a communication or information covered by the
23 attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the parties may
24 incorporate their agreement in the Stipulated Protective Order submitted to the
25 Court.

26 **XIII. MISCELLANEOUS**

27 A. Right to Further Relief
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1. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

B. Right to Assert Other Objections

1. By stipulating to the entry of this Protective Order, no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

C. Filing Protected Material

1. A Party that seeks to file under seal any Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material under seal is denied by the Court, then the Receiving Party may file the information in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the Court.

XIV. FINAL DISPOSITION

A. After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in Section V, within sixty (60) days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed and (2)

1 affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts,
2 compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any of
3 the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled
4 to retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and
5 hearing transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial
6 exhibits, expert reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work
7 product, even if such materials contain Protected Material. Any such archival
8 copies that contain or constitute Protected Material remain subject to this
9 Protective Order as set forth in Section V.

10 B. Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate
11 measures including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or
12 monetary sanctions.

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14 **[signatures next page]**
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IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

Dated: May 23, 2024

ARNOLD & PORTER KAYE SCHOLER LLP

By: /s/ James F. Speyer*

JAMES F. SPEYER

Attorneys for Plaintiff 7-Eleven, Inc.

Email: James.Speyer@arnoldporter.com

Dated: May 23, 2024

QUARLES & BRADY, LLP

By: /s/ Christian C. Burden

CHRISTIAN C. BURDEN

Attorneys for Plaintiff 7-Eleven, Inc.

Email: James.Speyer@arnoldporter.com

Dated: May 23, 2024

HANSEN LAW FIRM, P.C.

By: /s/ Craig A. Hansen

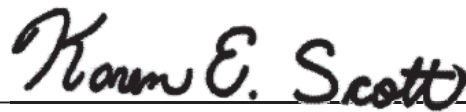
CRAIG A. HANSEN

Attorneys for Defendants, Gurtar Sandhu and
SSS Realm Corporation

Email: craig@hansenlawfirm.net

FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: November 8, 2024



KAREN E. SCOTT

United States Magistrate Judge

*Pursuant to Local Rule 5-4.3.4(2), the filer attests that all signatories listed, and on whose behalf the filing is submitted, concur in the filing's content and have authorized the filing.

EXHIBIT A
ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ [print or type full name], of _____
_____ [print or type full address], declare under penalty of perjury that I have
read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issue by
the United States District Court for the Central District of California on [DATE] in
the case of _____ [insert formal name of the case and the
number and initials assigned to it by the Court]. I agree to comply with and to be
bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order and I understand and
acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and punishment
in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner
any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any
person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court
for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this
Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after
termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ [print or
type full name] of _____ [print or type full address and
telephone number] as my California agent for service of process in connection with
this action or any proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective
Order.

Date: _____

City and State where sworn and signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____